

2021 Annual Report

Merriwa Central School



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2021 is provided to the community of Merriwa Central School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the Strategic Improvement Plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

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School vision

Our focus on quality teaching aims to ensure all students can achieve their true potential. "Valuing individual potential - achieving personal best". At Merriwa Central School the school community is committed to improving our education of students, in an inclusive environment, to develop responsible, engaged and successful learners, focused on educational attainment.

School context

Merriwa Central School is a K-12 school (229 students including 55 Aboriginal students) located within a supportive community in the Upper Hunter. It caters to students from the local town and villages servicing a largely rural community. It is one of the oldest schools in the State and was one of the first National Schools established in 1850. Merriwa Central School is unique in several respects. Firstly it is the only central school in the Hunter region, and secondly it is one of four central schools in the State with a separate primary and secondary campus.

The primary enrolment of 128 students is divided into 6 classes, some of which are multi-grade. Some classes are also across stage. The secondary enrolment of 101 is divided into classes of the same year or stage group. In some cases the class may consist of the entire enrolment for that year group. In 2021 a multi-categorical support class was established in both primary and secondary for students with additional support needs.

Students are taught a wide variety of subjects delivered by classroom teachers, through video conference, by distance education and at TAFE. The Upper Hunter Trade Training Centre is a joint facility in collaboration with Scone High School, Muswellbrook High School and Scone Grammar School. The Merriwa Campus enables students to complete Certificate II in Hospitality, as well as Certificate I in Metal and Engineering. The Early Action for Success (EAFS) initiative aims to improve students' performance through a targeted approach in the early years K-2.

Geographic, cultural and socioeconomic disadvantage are issues for our students in a region which has been impacted by drought in recent years. Increasingly access to paediatric and mental health support services to support our students has been difficult for teachers and parents. The school has acted proactively by appointing a Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing to assist parents to navigate access to these services.

The school consulted with the community to maintain focus on the plan, which included student growth and attainment, wellbeing and community.

Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our Strategic Improvement Plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our Strategic Improvement Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2021 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Delivering
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Delivering
LEARNING: Curriculum	Delivering
LEARNING: Assessment	Delivering
LEARNING: Reporting	Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Delivering
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Delivering
TEACHING: Professional standards	Delivering
TEACHING: Learning and development	Delivering
LEADING: Educational leadership	Delivering
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Delivering
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Delivering

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To improve student achievement, growth and performance in literacy and numeracy through establishing a culture of high expectations and quality teaching practice.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Quality Teaching K-12
- Data Driven Practices
- Aboriginal students attaining the HSC

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Professional learning: \$13,000.00

Socio-economic background: \$54,480.00

Aboriginal background: \$54,480.00

Summary of progress

Quality Teaching K-12

In 2021 we developed agreed practices for Literacy and Numeracy. All staff (K-12) received consistent professional development in Literacy with a particular focus on Vocabulary. Building staff knowledge on data skills and use was also a focus. Leaders across campuses developed action plans in consultation with staff. Professional learning was delivered to staff from key consultants which then drove action plans and supported the implementation of demonstration lessons. Engagement from staff was high, resulting in significant change in teacher understanding and practice in the use of evidence based teaching in literacy. In 2022 we will continue to build on this momentum to implement best practice.

Data Driven Practices

Staff completed a range of professional development (NAPLAN analysis, HSC evaluation, PLAN) aimed at building capacity to effectively use and identify data for teaching and learning. Two members of the school executive continue to develop leadership skills as part of CESE Leading Evaluation, Evidence Data (LEED) project.

Aboriginal students attaining the HSC

No students who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in 2021 completed the HSC. The 1 student who identified as Aboriginal was successful in gaining an apprenticeship and left mid-way through Year 12 to take up full-time employment.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
* Improvement in the percentage of students achieving in the top 2 bands in reading to be above system-negotiated target baseline: Year 3 and Year 5 and Year 7 and Year 9	<p>Year 3: The data indicates 50% of students are in the top 2 bands for reading</p> <p>Year 5: The data indicates 4.5% of students are in the top 2 bands for reading</p> <p>19.51% of primary students are now in the top two skill bands for reading above the baseline of 8.8% and target of 18.4%</p> <p>Year 7: The data indicates 7.14% of students are in the top 2 bands for reading</p>

* Improvement in the percentage of students achieving in the top 2 bands in reading to be above system-negotiated target baseline: Year 3 and Year 5 and Year 7 and Year 9	<p>Year 9: The data indicates 0% of students are in the top 2 bands for reading</p> <p>0% of secondary Year 9 students are now in the top two skill bands for reading below the baseline of 15.9% and target of 11.1%</p>
* Improvement in the percentage of students achieving in the top 2 bands in numeracy to be above system-negotiated target baseline: Year 3 and Year 5 and Year 7 and Year 9.	<p>Year 3: The data indicates 21.43% of students are in the top 2 bands for numeracy</p> <p>Year 5: In numeracy, 14.29% of students are in the top two skill bands</p> <p>15% of primary students are now in the top two skill bands for numeracy above the baseline of 6.4% and target of 14.9%</p> <p>Year 7: In numeracy, 7.69% of students are in the top 2 bands</p> <p>Year 9: In numeracy, 0% of students are in the top 2 bands</p> <p>0% of secondary Year 9 students are now in the top two skill bands for reading below the baseline of 13.3% and target of 17.8%</p>
* Improvement in the percentage of students achieving expected growth in reading to be above the school's system-negotiated target baseline .	<p>Year 5: The data indicates 75% of students achieved at or above expected growth in reading</p> <p>75% pf primary Year 5 students achieved at or above expected growth in reading, above the baseline of 44.1% and target of 55.1%</p> <p>Year 7: The data indicates 25% of students achieved at or above expected growth in reading</p> <p>Year 9: The data indicates 44% of students achieved at or above expected growth in reading</p> <p>50% of secondary Year 9 students achieved at or above expected growth in reading, below the baseline of 67.8% and target of 71.1%</p>
* Improvement in the percentage of students achieving expected growth in numeracy to be above system-negotiated target baseline.	<p>Year 5: In NAPLAN, 73.3% achieved at or above expected growth in numeracy</p> <p>73.3% of primary Year 5 students achieved at or above expected growth in numeracy</p> <p>Year 7: In NAPLAN, 60% achieved at or above expected growth in numeracy</p> <p>Year 9: In NAPLAN, 47% achieved at or above expected growth in numeracy</p> <p>61.5% of primary Year 5 students achieved at or above expected growth in numeracy, below the baseline of 71.3% and target of 74.5%</p>
* Increase the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining the HSC above the baseline of 39.7%, while maintaining their cultural identity (Mudgee Network target)	No student who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander completed their HSC in 2022

Strategic Direction 2: Wellbeing

Purpose

The wellbeing of every student is a priority Every Student is Known, Valued and Cared For. To ensure that all of our students are able to connect, succeed, thrive and learn, there will be a planned approach to developing whole school wellbeing processes that support high levels of wellbeing and engagement. The school culture is strongly focused on learning, and the building of educational aspiration.

Positive, respectful relationships are evident and widespread among students and staff and promote student wellbeing to ensure optimum conditions for student learning across the school.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Student Wellbeing
- Staff Wellbeing

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Socio-economic background: \$179,513.00

Beginning teacher support: \$20,000.00

Summary of progress

Student Wellbeing

At Merriwa Central School every student is known, valued and cared for. Wellbeing is embedded across K-12 with all staff sharing a collective responsibility. The Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing coordinates the Learning Support Team, individual case management and oversees outside services and agencies that support individual student need. Targeted wellbeing programs are successfully implemented across each of the years that have a focus on building strong relationships and gaining life long skills inline with the school ethos. The school regularly engages with outside services such as Pediatricians, Psychologists and student services that engage in both individual 1:1 counselling, small and large group activities. In 2021 the first secondary Multi-categorical class was established, and later in the year a primary class was established in Term 4.

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)

The Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) program is being embedded across K-12. A successful program launch in 2021 has supported the implementation of the program. All staff have undergone PBL training. The core values have been developed to reflect the school wide ethos. Students, staff and the community have developed school wide expectations in targeted workshops. Signage and branding of the Merriwa Central School PBL program is displayed across all school settings clearly outlining the expectations.

Staff Wellbeing

Induction processes to support new staff are critical given the majority of teaching staff are in their first appointment and within their first 5 years of service. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on school operations staff had limited access to professional learning both on and off site. Secondary staff used Microsoft Teams to access support for teacher networking in 2021. The Rural Learning Exchange has also provided a valuable opportunity for students and staff with HSC subjects. The introduction of social activities for staff in 2022 will support teacher wellbeing initiatives. Greater access to professional learning both on and off site will build staff capacity.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
* Expectations of learning and behaviour are co-developed with students, staff and community and monitored through explicit learning, behaviour and attendance plans.	Students, staff and the community contributed to the development of PBL school wide expectations. Further exploration of PBL was postponed to 2022 as a direct result of COVID-19. The PBL team will determine and develop resources to explicitly deliver behaviour expectations. Student performance data (Behaviour/ Attendance/ TTFM) is measured and analysed to develop ongoing procedures.
* Decrease negative recorded behaviours and suspension by 5% determined by a three year baseline of incident reports as at year end 2020.	Behaviour data was analysed. New PBL procedures has increased the reporting and monitoring of student behaviour which resulted in greater number of incidents being recorded. A spike in suspension data occurred after a prolonged period of at home learning after students transitioned back to face-to-face learning. The PBL team will investigate and monitor behaviour trends in 2022 to reduce the number of negative incidents to meet the identified baseline target.
* Increase the percentage of students attending > 90% of time to be above system-negotiated target baseline for primary 61% and secondary 43.6%.	Student attendance data was analysed with 45.04% of secondary students attended > 90% of the time. The attendance of secondary students is above the baseline data. 60.07% of primary students attended > 90% of the time. The attendance of primary students is within 1% of the baseline data. COVID-19 and learning from home had a large impact on student attendance data in 2021.

Strategic Direction 3: Community

Purpose

The success of every student is based upon the successful partnership between the school, parents and the broader community. A shared vision ensures continued community confidence in Merriwa Central School and its students. The school is embraced by the community with a shared vision and advocacy.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Community Engagement

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Socio-economic background: \$5,000.00

Summary of progress

The second year of COVID had a significant impact on school operations and the ability to engage with community. Restrictions on access to school sites by parents and visitors meant regular activities such as parent teacher evenings and whole school events could not proceed. In response to these changes the school increased use of social media to provide up-to-date information to parents in a rapidly changing environment. Feedback from parents indicated community messaging through mainstream media was often difficult to follow, and metropolitan Sydney based.

Extensive community consultation took place in regard to the community newsletter the "Merriwa Ringer". The publication had played a vital role in the Merriwa community for 30 years, however like many rural publications had become increasingly unviable on financial grounds. Publication of the Merriwa Ringer ceased at the end of 2021. The school will review options for the new format of a school newsletter in 2022.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
* Aboriginal education team develop an action plan to engage students, staff, parents and community members. Personalised Learning Plan in place for all Aboriginal students.	Action plan developed by the Aboriginal education team, with a calendar of events scheduled through 2021-2022. Planning is underway for all students and staff to complete cultural awareness workshops and professional development in 2022. Personalised Learning Plans are in place for all Aboriginal students.
* Ochre Hub to engage with parents of Aboriginal students as part of support program within secondary.	Ochre Hub was able to engage with all secondary Aboriginal students in Term 1, however ongoing contact was limited due to the impact of COVID on school operations.
* School to establish baseline data of students accessing workplace learning opportunities. School to work data and post-school destination surveys indicate students gaining employment in vocational fields.	Workplace learning was either placed on hold or disrupted due to the impact of COVID on many business operations. Post school destination surveys for Year 10 students indicated 33% gained employment, and 50% enrolled in TAFE. In Year 11 surveys indicated 40% gained employment, and 20% enrolled in TAFE. In Year 12 surveys indicated 57% gained employment, and 29% gained entry to university.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
<p>Integration funding support</p> <p>\$108,960.00</p>	<p>Integration funding support (IFS) allocations support eligible students at Merriwa Central School in mainstream classes who require moderate to high levels of adjustment.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional staffing to assist students with additional learning needs • staffing release for targeted professional learning around trauma informed practice <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Targeted support for students with additional learning needs through increased numbers of quality support staff working with students..</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Integration funding support allocation will reduce in 2022 with the establishment of additional support classes. One School Learning Support Officer 1.0 FTE will be employed to support students.</p>
<p>Socio-economic background</p> <p>\$308,852.00</p>	<p>Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at Merriwa Central School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Teaching K-12 • Student Wellbeing • Community Engagement • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional staffing to implement Quicksmart numeracy to support identified students with additional needs • employment of external providers to support students with additional learning needs • providing students without economic support for educational materials, uniform, equipment and other items • Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing to case manage student access to support services <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: The Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing has strengthened access and coordination of student support services resulting in the establishment of two support classes across primary and secondary. Improved numeracy results for students Yr 4-8 participating in the Quicksmart numeracy program.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Funds will be allocated to employ the Deputy Principal Student Welfare ACIP in 2022. COVID ILSP funds will be re-directed to employ 2.0 FTE Quicksmart numeracy tutors.</p>
<p>Aboriginal background</p> <p>\$64,480.00</p>	<p>Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning needs of Aboriginal students at Merriwa Central School. Funds under this equity loading have been targeted to ensure that the performance of</p>

<p>Aboriginal background</p> <p>\$64,480.00</p>	<p>Aboriginal students in NSW public schools, across a broad range of key educational measures, improves to match or better those of the broader student population, while maintaining cultural identity.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Teaching K-12 • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of specialist additional staff (LaST) to support Aboriginal students • employment of additional staff to support literacy and numeracy programs <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Additional support for Aboriginal students including access to Speech Pathologists through the school language program. A successful Home Reader program and Book Club coordination.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: School Learning Support Officer will be employed 1.0 FTE to support Aboriginal students.</p>
<p>English language proficiency</p> <p>\$2,400.00</p>	<p>English language proficiency equity loading provides support for students at all four phases of English language learning at Merriwa Central School.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of additional staff to support delivery of targeted initiatives <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Additional School Learning Support Officer time allocated to targeted students to develop and implement individual learning plans..</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Additional resources will be purchased to support teaching and learning and engage young readers.</p>
<p>Low level adjustment for disability</p> <p>\$189,021.60</p>	<p>Low level adjustment for disability equity loading provides support for students at Merriwa Central School in mainstream classes who have a disability or additional learning and support needs requiring an adjustment to their learning.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of Speech Pathologist to develop phonological awareness, articulation, receptive, expressive language and self-regulation for identified students • employment of SLSO to improve the development of students by implementing speech and OT programs developed by specialists • providing support for targeted students within the classroom through the employment of School Learning and Support Officers <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in:</p>

<p>Low level adjustment for disability</p> <p>\$189,021.60</p>	<p>Targeted support and screening for students in early years of schooling.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Additional Learning and Support teachers 1.2 FTE will be employed to provide individual support to students.</p>
<p>Location</p> <p>\$62,000.00</p>	<p>The location funding allocation is provided to Merriwa Central School to address school needs associated with remoteness and/or isolation.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this operational funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subsidising student excursions to enable all students to participate • incursion expenses • student assistance to support excursions <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: All students readily accessed a range of learning opportunities beyond the local area, on an equitable basis with their non-regional peers.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Funds will be used to subsidise the cost of excursions and lease the school minibus to ensure all students can access external learning opportunities.</p>
<p>Literacy and numeracy</p> <p>\$10,000.00</p>	<p>The literacy and numeracy funding allocation is provided to address the literacy and numeracy learning needs of students at Merriwa Central School from Kindergarten to Year 6.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online program subscriptions to support literacy and numeracy • literacy and numeracy programs and resources, to support teaching, learning and assessment • purchasing of literacy resources such as quality picture books for guided and shared instruction <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Improved resources for teaching literacy and numeracy, including the purchase of new engaging decodable readers.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Funds will be allocated to expand the range of online literacy and numeracy resources</p>
<p>Early Action for Success (EAfS)</p> <p>\$102,907.00</p>	<p>The early action for success (EAfS) funding allocation is provided to improve students' performance at Merriwa Central School through targeted support in the lowest quartile of NAPLAN performance in literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of Instructional Leader to facilitate and support K-2 teachers

<p>Early Action for Success (EAfS)</p> <p>\$102,907.00</p>	<p>in building the capacity of teachers to explicitly teach, assess and implement quality literacy and numeracy learning opportunities for all students</p> <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: 55% of Kindergarten students reached or surpassed the end of Semester 1 EAfS reading benchmark/L3 reading target (level 5 texts) 19% of Year 1 students reached or surpassed the end of Semester 1 EAfS reading benchmark/L3 reading target (level 15 texts) 79% of Year 2 students reached or surpassed the end of Semester 1 EAfS reading benchmark/L3 reading target (level 19 texts)</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: The Early Action for Success initiative will cease at the end of 2021, with a new permanent position Assistant Principal Curriculum and Instruction (AP C&I) established 1.2 FTE.</p>
<p>QTSS release</p> <p>\$23,881.00</p>	<p>The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Merriwa Central School.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assistant principals provided with additional release time to support classroom programs • staffing release to align professional learning to the Strategic Improvement Plan and develop the capacity of staff <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Primary executive supported with additional release to enhance leadership capacity.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Staff will be employed to provide additional release time (2 hours per week) to primary executive in 2022.</p>
<p>COVID ILSP</p> <p>\$146,000.00</p>	<p>The purpose of the COVID intensive learning support program is to deliver intensive small group tuition for students who have been disadvantaged by the move to remote and/or flexible learning and were identified by their school as most likely to benefit from additional support in 2021.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of teachers/educators to deliver small group tuition <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Due to staffing shortages the COVID ILSP had mixed results across primary and secondary.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: COVID ILSP will be used to employ 2.0 FTE numeracy tutors in 2022.</p>

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Boys	128	122	114	122
Girls	132	116	108	107

Attendance

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to previous years due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government encouraged students to learn from home, where possible, for a seven week period from 24 March to 22 May 2020. During this period, schools monitored engagement with learning to determine whether students were marked present. This changed the attendance measure. There was also some evidence of varied marking practices as schools adjusted to the learning from home period, with some schools recording higher attendance rates while others recording markedly lower rates.

Attendance figures in 2021 were calculated differently to align with the third edition of ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Reporting. Changes include treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half day absence (instead of their actual value, calculated as a proportion of a nominal 6-hour day) and covers all weeks during Semester 1. Prior to 2021, the final week of Term 2 was excluded.

Furthermore, the Department implemented an automated attendance feed (AAF) system in Semester 1 2021. AAF transfers data automatically from third-party attendance management systems to the Department's centralised data warehouse every night. The AAF has significantly improved data quality in 2021, which has affected data comparability with previous years.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 continued to affect student attendance. Analysis of attendance codes showed a change in the structure of absence reasons in 2021.

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
K	89.4	93.5	94.5	89.3
1	88	91.2	91.8	89
2	90.2	94.8	93.5	91.4
3	88.4	90.6	92.8	89.1
4	88.6	91.9	92.1	92.9
5	89.3	88.9	90.2	88
6	89.9	89.5	89.5	87.1
7	88.7	84.9	92.7	86.7
8	77.5	86.1	86	83.1
9	72.4	84.7	90.2	81.1
10	82.8	76.7	87.4	82.8
11	81.5	78.4	82.5	74.5
12	84.8	87.8	90.6	77.1
All Years	85.6	87.6	90.6	86
State DoE				
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
K	93.8	93.1	92.4	92.8
1	93.4	92.7	91.7	92.7
2	93.5	93	92	92.6
3	93.6	93	92.1	92.7
4	93.4	92.9	92	92.5
5	93.2	92.8	92	92.1
6	92.5	92.1	91.8	91.5
7	91.8	91.2	92.1	89.7
8	89.3	88.6	90.1	86.7
9	87.7	87.2	89	84.9
10	86.1	85.5	87.7	83.3
11	86.6	86.6	88.2	83.6
12	89	88.6	90.4	87
All Years	91.5	91	91.1	89.8

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to

record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.

Post school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10 %	Year 11 %	Year 12 %
Seeking Employment	N/A	N/A	N/A
Employment	33	40	57
TAFE entry	50	20	N/A
University Entry	N/A	N/A	29
Other	17	20	14
Unknown	N/A	20	N/A

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

55.56% of Year 12 students at Merriwa Central School undertook vocational education and training in 2021.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

83.3% of all Year 12 students at Merriwa Central School expected to complete Year 12 in 2021 received a Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Head Teacher(s)	3
Classroom Teacher(s)	16.17
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	1.2
Teacher Librarian	1
School Administration and Support Staff	8.09
Other Positions	0.2

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, and scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2021, 4.3% of the Department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2021 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	4.40%
Teachers	3.30%	3.20%

Note 1 - The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025 takes a career pathway approach in that it sets an ambitious target of 3% Aboriginal employment at each non-executive grade of the public sector by 2025.

Note 2 - Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice.

Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2021 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	1,624,024
Revenue	5,553,182
Appropriation	5,494,165
Sale of Goods and Services	16,698
Grants and contributions	40,267
Investment income	1,063
Other revenue	990
Expenses	-5,646,590
Employee related	-4,614,314
Operating expenses	-1,032,277
Surplus / deficit for the year	-93,408
Closing Balance	1,530,616

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

A decision was made to cease production of the town newsletter the "Merriwa Ringer" due to the rising operational cost and financial burden on the school.

An application was successful under the Regional Renewal Grants program for the construction of a new school hall on the secondary campus under a 50:50 funding agreement. Funds have been allocated \$600,000 for its construction in 2022. Funding has also been allocated for the replacement of the existing machinery shed on the school farm.

The impact of staffing shortages has meant some funded programs were unable to run in 2021.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2021 SBAR Adjustments (\$)
Targeted Total	99,757
Equity Total	578,886
Equity - Aboriginal	80,056
Equity - Socio-economic	308,113
Equity - Language	2,400
Equity - Disability	188,317
Base Total	3,837,319
Base - Per Capita	54,727
Base - Location	107,973
Base - Other	3,674,619
Other Total	368,767
Grand Total	4,884,728

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

School performance - NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data.

School performance - HSC

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).

The information in this report must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Where there are fewer than 10 students in a course or subject, summary statistics or graphical representation of student performance is not available.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

The impact of COVID restrictions on school operations required more frequent and targeted communication with parents through the use of social media platforms such as the Skoolbag app. Parents often found news media confusing given it was skewed to metropolitan schools and not small rural schools. At times we were concerned that we were providing too much information through the use of social media, however parents indicated they were thankful for the messaging as it related to our school.

The Student Representative Council led changes to the secondary school uniform. Following consultation with stakeholders students designed a new secondary jersey which was introduced in 2021. The P&C supported the introduction of the jersey by providing a subsidy to parents to reduce its cost during the introductory phase.

Community meetings were held in regard to the community newsletter the "Merriwa Ringer" which has been produced by the school for nearly 30 years. Over 80 residents attending the meetings highlighting the significance the newsletter has played in the local community. Due to the rise in social media use in recent years, and the increasing cost of production it was decided the newsletter was no longer financially viable. The school ceased production of the newsletter at the end of 2021, and a community committee was established to consider the newsletters future.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for addressing incidents of racism and supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. The Principal is responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. The school has an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Anti-Racism - School statement

Ms Narelle Smith Deputy Principal is the schools Anti-Racism Contact Officer.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers are responsible for addressing the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.